

V. REMARKS

Claims 1-22 are rejected on the grounds of non-statutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-16 of U.S. Patent No: 7,159,865 in view of Takeuchi et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,086,066). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

In determining double patenting, the issue is whether any claim of the application defines merely an obvious variation of an invention claimed in the earlier patent or application. It does not prohibit a later claiming of subject matter that is disclosed but not claimed in the earlier patent or application. Double patenting is concerned with attempts to "claim" related subject matter twice. In re Gibbs, 437 F.2d 486, 168 USPQ 578 (CCPA 1971). It is respectfully submitted that the rejection must be withdrawn because the claims of the instant application do not claim related subject matter twice.

Claims 1-22 are provisionally rejected on the grounds of non-statutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-5 of U.S. Patent No. 7,220,181. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

As discussed above, in determining double patenting, the issue is whether any claim of the application defines merely an obvious variation of an invention claimed in the earlier patent or application. It does not prohibit a later claiming of subject matter that is disclosed but not claimed in the earlier patent or application. Double patenting is concerned with attempts to "claim" related subject matter twice. In re Gibbs, 437 F.2d 486, 168 USPQ 578 (CCPA 1971). It is respectfully submitted that the rejection must be withdrawn because the claims of the instant application do not claim related subject matter twice.

Withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-9 are rejected under 35 USC 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Takeuchi et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,086,066) in view of Yamamoto et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,118,420), Okada (U.S. Patent No. 4,889,339) and Official Notice. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Takeuchi teaches a reel apparatus for game machine that includes a plurality of reels which rotate around a single axis. Each of the reels has a plurality of pictures formed in series on a peripheral surface thereof along a circumferential direction thereof and is rotated independently from each other and automatically stopped in sequence while each placing one of the plurality of pictures at a preset angle position. A cover member is formed with a predetermined picture and is movable between the preset angle position and a shelter position other than the preset angle position. The cover member is disposed in front of a selected one of the stopping reels. When the stopping reel is stopped so as to place a predetermined picture at the preset angle position, in a case where another of the reels is stopped so that a specific picture is placed at the preset angle position in combination with the predetermined picture, the cover member moves from the shelter position to the preset angle position and minutely vibrates at the preset angle position before being stopped.

Yamamoto discloses a display device for displaying images or characters superimposed on an outside view. The device includes a transparent type LCD, a signal generator and a light system. The transparent type LCD includes a pair of transparent plates facing each other and spaced with a predetermined gap. A polymer dispersed liquid crystal is disposed between the transparent plates which can be switched between a transparent state and a diffraction state pixel by pixel to display images or characters. The signal generator gives display signals to the transparent type LCD. The light system includes a light source emitting light rays that enter the transparent plates from their edge faces and a stop plate disposed between the edge faces of the transparent plates and the light source. The stop plate has an opening that extends along a longitudinal direction of the edge faces of the transparent plate

and a width of the opening in a cross direction changing along the longitudinal direction.

Okada teaches a slot machine that has a single stop button which is manipulated by a player every time it is desired to stop a plurality of moving symbol columns one after another. A selection device selects a symbol column to be stopped every time the stop button is manipulated. A stop device stops the movement of the symbol column selected by the selection device. The player can stop all of the symbol columns sequentially in a predetermined order by manipulating the single stop button as many times as the number of symbol columns.

The Office Action takes official notice that reflectors for lights are well known as a way to direct light and thereby to reduce power demand by using less powerful lights.

Claim 1 is directed to a gaming machine that includes a variable display unit that variably displays a plurality of symbols, an internal winning combination determination unit that is configured to determine an internal winning combination, a plurality of operation units with which a player stops the variable display of the variable display unit, a stop control unit that is configured to perform a stop control of the variable display based on the determination result of the internal winning combination determination unit and on a stop operation of each of the operation units, a game medium payout unit that is configured to pay out a game medium to the player in a case where a stop state of the variable display unit stopped by the stop control unit corresponds to a predetermined stop state and a front display unit that is provided in front of the variable display unit and configured to enable the player to see the symbols on the variable display unit therethrough, and to display various images. Claim 1 recites that the front display unit includes an electrical display device and is arranged to move relative to the variable display unit to and between a first front display unit position and a second front display unit position different from the first front display unit position. Additionally, claim 1 recites that the front display unit includes a

frame that supports the electrical display device with the frame having a plurality of edge members serially connected to each other in a continuous loop to define and surround an opening that allows light to pass therethrough and a light assembly that is connected to the frame and includes a light source and a reflection cover.

Furthermore, claim 1 recites that the light source is disposed near a selected one of the plurality of edge members and the reflection cover is connected to and along the selected one of the plurality of edge members to partially surround the light source and is configured to simultaneously reflect light from the light source toward both the electrical display device and the variable display unit regardless if the front display unit is in the first front display unit position or the second front display unit position.

It is respectfully submitted that none of the applied art, alone or in combination, teaches or suggests the features of claim 1. Specifically, it is respectfully submitted that the applied art, alone or in combination, fails to teach or suggest that the front display unit includes a frame that supports the electrical display device with the frame having a plurality of edge members serially connected to each other in a continuous loop to define and surround an opening that allows light to pass therethrough and a light assembly that is connected to the frame and includes a light source and a reflection cover. Furthermore, it is respectfully submitted that the applied art also fails to teach or suggest that the light source is disposed near a selected one of the plurality of edge members and the reflection cover is connected to and along the selected one of the plurality of edge members to partially surround the light source and is configured to simultaneously reflect light from the light source toward both the electrical display device and the variable display unit.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that one of ordinary skill in the art could not combine the features of the applied art to arrive at the claimed invention because the applied art is devoid of all the features of the claimed invention. As a result, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1 is allowable over the applied art.

Claims 2-9 depend from claim 1 and include all of the features of claim 1. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the dependent claims are allowable at least for the reason claim 1 is allowable as well as for the features they recite.

Claims 10-22 are rejected under 35 USC 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Takeuchi in view of Yamamoto et al. and Official Notice. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 10 is directed to a gaming machine that includes a first display device that variably displays a plurality of symbols, a second display device that electrically displays various images with the second display device being provided in front of the first display device and configured to enable the player to see the symbols displayed by the first display device therethrough, an input device that allows a player to input a command to bet and a controller that controls the first display device and the second display device in accordance with the command to provide a game to the player. Claim 10 recites that the second display device includes an electrical display device and is arranged to move relative to the first display device to and between a first position and a second position different from the first position. Also, claim 10 recites that the second display device includes a frame that supports the electrical display device with the frame having a plurality of edge members serially connected to each other in a continuous loop to define and surround an opening that allows light to pass therethrough and a light assembly connected to the frame. Claim 10 also recites that the light assembly includes a light source and a reflection cover with the light source disposed near a selected one of the plurality of edge members and with the reflection cover connected to and along the selected one of the plurality of edge members to partially surround the light source and configured to simultaneously reflect light from the light source toward both the electrical display device and the first display device regardless if the front display unit is in the first front display unit position or the second front display unit position.

It is respectfully submitted that none of the applied art, alone or in combination,

teaches or suggests the features of claim 10. Specifically, it is respectfully submitted that the applied art, alone or in combination, fails to teach or suggest that the light assembly includes a light source and a reflection cover with the light source disposed near a selected one of the plurality of edge members and with the reflection cover connected to and along the selected one of the plurality of edge members to partially surround the light source and configured to simultaneously reflect light from the light source toward both the electrical display device and the first display device.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that one of ordinary skill in the art could not combine the features of the applied art to arrive at the claimed invention because the applied art is devoid of all the features of the claimed invention. As a result, it is respectfully submitted that claim 10 is allowable over the applied art.

Claim 19 is directed to a gaming machine that includes a variable display unit that variably displays a plurality of symbols, an internal winning combination determination unit that is configured to determine an internal winning combination, a stop control unit that is configured to perform a stop control of the variable display based on the determination result of the internal winning combination determination unit, a game medium payout unit that is configured to pay out a game medium to the player in a case where a stop state of the variable display unit stopped by the stop control unit corresponds to a predetermined stop state and a front display unit that is provided in front of the variable display unit and operative to move rectilinearly forward and backwards while being in front of the variable display unit. Claim 19 recites that the front display unit includes an electrical display device and is arranged to move relative to the variable display unit to and between a first front display unit position and a second front display unit position different from the first front display unit position such that, when the electrical display device is in the first front display unit position, the electrical display device generating a front display unit effect is positioned in front of the variable display device generating a variable display unit effect at a first distance so that a player can select to visualize either the front display unit effect or the variable display effect and, when the electrical display device is in the second front display unit

position, the electrical display device generating the front display unit effect is positioned in front of the variable display device generating the variable display unit effect at a second distance being less than the first distance so that the player visualizes a combination of the front display unit effect and the variable display effect.

It is respectfully submitted that none of the applied art, alone or in combination, teaches or suggests the features of claim 19. Specifically, it is respectfully submitted that the applied art, alone or in combination, fails to teach or suggest a front display unit that is provided in front of the variable display unit and operative to move rectilinearly forward and backwards while being in front of the variable display unit. Furthermore, it is respectfully submitted that the applied art also fails to teach or suggest that the front display unit includes an electrical display device and is arranged to move relative to the variable display unit to and between a first front display unit position and a second front display unit position different from the first front display unit position such that, when the electrical display device is in the first front display unit position, the electrical display device generating a front display unit effect is positioned in front of the variable display device generating a variable display unit effect at a first distance so that a player can select to visualize either the front display unit effect or the variable display effect and, when the electrical display device is in the second front display unit position, the electrical display device generating the front display unit effect is positioned in front of the variable display device generating the variable display unit effect at a second distance being less than the first distance so that the player visualizes a combination of the front display unit effect and the variable display effect.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that one of ordinary skill in the art could not combine the features of the applied art to arrive at the claimed invention because the applied art is devoid of all the features of the claimed invention. As a result, it is respectfully submitted that claim 19 is allowable over the applied art.

Claim 21 is directed to a gaming machine that includes a variable display unit

that variably displays a plurality of symbols, an internal winning combination determination unit that is configured to determine an internal winning combination, a plurality of operation units operative to stop the variable display of the variable display unit, a stop control unit that is configured to perform a stop control of the variable display based on the determination result of the internal winning combination determination unit, a game medium payout unit that is configured to pay out a game medium to the player in a case where a stop state of the variable display unit stopped by the stop control unit corresponds to a predetermined stop state and a front display unit. Claim 21 recites that the front display unit includes an electrical display device and is arranged to move relative to the variable display unit to and between a first front display unit position where the electrical display device is superimposed over the variable display unit and a second front display unit position where the electrical display device is removed from vision of a player so that the player visualizes on the variable display unit such that, when the electrical display device is in the first front display unit position, the electrical display device generating a front display unit effect is positioned in front of the variable display device generating a variable display unit effect so that the player visualizes a combination of the front display unit effect and the variable display effect and, when the electrical display device is in the second front display unit position, the player sees only variable display unit effect.

It is respectfully submitted that none of the applied art, alone or in combination, teaches or suggests the features of claim 21. Specifically, it is respectfully submitted that the applied art, alone or in combination, fails to teach or suggest a front display unit that includes an electrical display device and is arranged to move relative to the variable display unit to and between a first front display unit position where the electrical display device is superimposed over the variable display unit and a second front display unit position where the electrical display device is removed from vision of a player so that the player visualizes on the variable display unit such that, when the electrical display device is in the first front display unit position, the electrical display device generating a front display unit effect is positioned in front of the variable display device generating a variable display unit effect so that the player visualizes a

combination of the front display unit effect and the variable display effect and, when the electrical display device is in the second front display unit position, the player sees only variable display unit effect.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that one of ordinary skill in the art could not combine the features of the applied art to arrive at the claimed invention because the applied art is devoid of all the features of the claimed invention. As a result, it is respectfully submitted that claim 21 is allowable over the applied art.

Claims 11-18 depend from claim 10 and include all of the features of claim 10. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the dependent claims are allowable at least for the reason claim 10 is allowable as well as for the features they recite.

Claim 20 depends from claim 19 and includes all of the features of claim 19. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the dependent claim is allowable at least for the reasons claim 19 is allowable as well as for the features it recites.

Claim 22 depends from claim 21 and includes all of the features of claim 21. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the dependent claim is allowable at least for the reasons claim 21 is allowable as well as for the features it recites.

Furthermore, in the configuration disclosed in Takeuchi (US 066), as apparent from the term "cover member 16" and "shelter position," the cover member 16 is configured to be movable between two positions in order to temporary hide the reel images.

When the two references Takeuchi and Yamamoto (US'420) are combined, and the cover member 16 is replaced with Yamamoto's transparent display device, the reel images could no longer be hidden when the cover member 16 is in the covering position.

Accordingly, any skilled person would not be motivated to combine the configuration of Yakeuchi with the transparent display device disclosed in Yamamoto.

In view of the above, withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

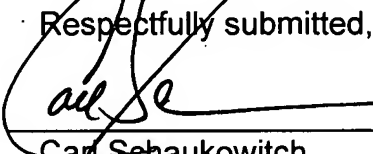
Newly-added claims 23 and 24 also include features not shown in the applied art.

Further, Applicants assert that there are also reasons other than those set forth above why the pending claims are patentable. Applicants hereby reserve the right to submit those other reasons and to argue for the patentability of claims not explicitly addressed herein in future papers.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration of the application and allowance of the pending claims are respectfully requested. Should the Examiner believe anything further is desirable in order to place the application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' representative at the telephone number listed below.

Should additional fees be necessary in connection with the filing of this paper or if a Petition for Extension of Time is required for timely acceptance of the same, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 18-0013 for any such fees and Applicant(s) hereby petition for such extension of time.

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Respectfully submitted,

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